

A REAL CHRISTMAS STORY FROM SAN GUENTIN PRISON

Wherever a church bell chimed or the Christian civilization is known, eloquent tongues Sunday, Christmas and during the Yuletide season, portray the story of Bethlehem and the Sanctified Manger, where more than 19 centuries ago the most transcendent event in the history of mankind took place.

In every oration that dwells on the Nativity the speaker will couple the birth with the narrative of the supreme sacrifice—the greatest in the annals of the world. Pulpiters Sunday expounded the beauties of self-sacrifice as manifesting the spirit of the day. Orators, clothed in all the richness of their diction, told of the value of giving for others.

But no story that was unfolded in pulpit or rostrum betters the tale that comes out of California to enrich the Christmas annals. Let your footsteps be guided to the Golden Gate, into San Quentin, the castle of the doomed, from whose walls but few have ever escaped and through whose portals many have entered to leave only when the grim summons has arrived.

Nine men, sullen and taciturn, sit on a rude wooden bench, their lips sealed, their eyes heavy lidded and on their cheeks the first ashen sign of the prison pallor.

About these nine is laughter, fun and merriment. On every side abounds life.

Ahead of them gleams the sable trail that leads to death.

Condemned murderers are these nine, sentenced to expiate their crime with the forfeiture of their own lives. In his anxiety to make the last hours of those doomed as carefree as possible the kindly warden has invited them into the jail yard to watch their more fortunate fellows athletics.

Suddenly a giant of a man, big and gray and handsome, whose frame shows the vigor that once was his and whose cheeks have not yet yielded to the whiteness that tells of long confinement, whispers into the ear of his guard.

A moment before, a husky negro—big and wiry and strong—has just won the baseball throw distance with a mighty heave that would not have shamed a Speaker, a Cobb or any other master of a mighty baseball arm. As the condemned watches the husky heaver his eyes become alight, his pulses quicken, once more he walks out of the shadow of the doomed.

After the little confab the guard walks over to the warden. He hurriedly communicates with James A. Johnston, head of San Quentin, and the latter shakes his head in affirmative reply to a request.

He has given permission to him who shortly must pass through the little door to the chair of death to take his place on the line and enter the lists for baseball throwers. With a sweep that shows practice and knowledge the condemned murderer draws back his arm and flings the ball, true and far. Feet beyond the mark made by the negro the ball is found.

The black man goes to the line again. Ere he heaves the ball he glances at the murderer who has preceded him. With a start he recognizes the man that was once his cellmate—and the truth flashes that he

is about to die in saluting sport the last time.

It means much to win an event in San Quentin. No college boy in that unconquerable ambition, flush of that unquenchable spirit, that unconquerable ambition, tries harder to win his letter and glory for his alma mater than do these prisoners struggle and tussle to be victorious in these competitions.

The negro knows that he can win easily. For a minute he wrestles with ambition and then—he throws. The ball falls far short of the mark made by the condemned man. To cover up his deliberate attempt to see the dusky chap snorts in simulated disgust. He acts the part as if it were endowed with all the evil in the world.

Once more the murderer who is about to die comes to the scratch. His smile is wide, his face is alight with the thought of triumph, with the feeling that once more he is conqueror, rather than one upon whom the law has set the seal of death. He bows again.

His spirit, aroused by the victory that seems within his grasp, gives more power to his arm, greater strength to his dormant muscles. The ball speeds beyond the mark the condemned man had made before.

With a gleaming smile on his black face, but with no laggard faltering steps, the negro advances to the line again. With his spurious effort masked to outwit any prying eyes the black man throws the ball, but it is a mere toss. The man sentenced to die has won. Into his sombre life, soon to be given to the inexorable law, has come once more the thrill of victory, a momentary flash that wipes out for the seconds his coming engagement with eternity.

With a smile that dazzles in its warmth the giant negro walks to his white conqueror, extends his hand and rivals meet in a hearty clasp. The condemned murderer, flushed with success, does not realize that he has achieved that last thrill because of the sacrifice of his brother of the black skin.

He is a negro, he is a convict, but beneath that livery of sable lives a soul that is white and search the world over and over again and it is doubtful if anyone can find another more worthy to be called a real sportsman.

So, during this Yuletide season, if you would reach down and grasp the real message of the season, would carry into your ken the real meaning of Yuletide, let your mind roam across the continent to San Quentin.

The fall and early winters days furnish excellent opportunity for people to build up a reserve of health to go through winter on. Frosty mornings and clear skies make germs live hard—or rather will not let them live at all—if people will only work in harmony with Jack Frost and the Honorable Sun who have killed more hostile germs than all the doctors and sanitary engineers, as good as they are these days, ever heard of. It is impossible for everybody to spend the proper amount of time in the open, but it is a sure thing that most of us have more time for it than we make out we do. Old Man Habit or just ordinary laziness interfere with us more than want of opportunity—Orphan's Friend.

GORDON INS. COMPANY OFFICES COMPLETED

Will Be Occupied Early in Year—Represents Romance of Achievement

Citizens of Monroe coming back to their home town for the holidays after an absence of several months have noted with pride that a new two-story building of tapestry brick has been erected on the lot in the rear of Efford's Department store. Upon inquiry they learn that the building was erected by the Gordon Insurance and Investment Company as an office building.

"Well, Monroe does grow," the comment has probably come back and the returning citizen has seen only one building and is pleased.

But to those who know, the building means more than a collection of brick upon what was a vacant lot. It represents the romance of achievement. It represents the growth of a drugging insurance agency to an insurance business producing \$5,000,000 worth of business each year. It is the life story of W. M. Gordon and W. E. Brown.

And for those who have eyes to see, a network of lines radiate from the building into the principal towns and cities of North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia each line compelling attention to the fact that Monroe is on the map.

Twenty-two years ago Mr. W. M. Gordon arrived in Monroe with a line of health and accident insurance as his stock in trade. In those days insurance had not gained the recognition that it has today and the young insurance agent had to keep everlastingly at it to get his wares across. Faith in his policies, faith in his company and faith in the men with whom he dealt put the business across. Mr. Gordon developed a lucrative business.

Meantime however he did not forget to look to the future and prepare for bigger things. In 1908 the Gordon Insurance and Investment Company was organized with Mr. W. E. Brown as secretary and treasurer. This pair made a good team and the company was given the state agency for the Philadelphia Life. A few months later and the border counties of South Carolina were added to their territory and in 1910 all South Carolina came into the contract.

In 1919 the officers of the Philadelphia concern began to sit up and take notice of the firm doing business in the little town of Monroe. The firm had turned in a business of \$3,000,000.

"They are making things hum down there, why not add Georgia to their territory and make them agency managers for the Southeastern Division?" the Philadelphia officers asked among themselves. And it was done.

Looking for other fields to conquer the Monroe firm secured the state agency for a general accident company of Philadelphia.

The growth as outlined has made the offices of the company over the Farmers and Merchants Bank, inadequate. Hence the erection of the modern structure in front of the postoffice. The building has an over all dimension of 35 by 55 feet and floor space of 2500 square feet, with more available.

The first floor will be equipped with bank furniture and used as general offices. The second floor will be a store for supplies and to a trustees room. The firm expects to get into its new quarters early in January.

Insured for \$3,000,000

J. C. Penney, chairman of the board of directors of the J. C. Penney Corporation, of 370 Seventh Avenue, New York City, N. Y., became a few days ago one of the four men in the world whose lives are insured for \$3,000,000 or more. The Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company issued \$1,500,000 additional insurance to Mr. Penney, which brings his total to \$3,000,000. He will pay an annual premium of \$120,000. According to the records, only three other men carry as large an amount of insurance. They are Rodman Wanamaker, who is insured for \$4,500,000; Pierre du Pont, \$4,000,000 and John Wanamaker, \$3,000,000. The additional insurance on Mr. Penney, who is forty-seven years old, was written by I. W. Brill, of 516 Fifty Avenue.

Rebecca's Hymn

(Sir Walter Scott)
When Israel of the Lord beloved,
Out of the land of bondage came,
Her father's God before her moved,
An awful guide in smoke and flame.
By day, along the astonished lands,
The cloudy pillar glided slow;
By night, Arabia's crimsoned sands
Returned the fiery column's glow.

There rose the choral hymn of praise
And tramp and timbrel answered keen.
There Zion's daughters poured their days
With priests' and warriors' voice between.

No portents now our foes amaze;
Forsaken Israel wanders alone;
Our fathers would not know thy ways,
And thou has left them to their own.

But, presently still though now unseen,
When brightly shines the prosperous day,
Be thoughts of thee a cloudy screen
To temper the deceitful ray.

And oh, when stoops on Judah's path
In storm and shade the frequent night,
Be thought, long-suffering, slow to wrath,
A burning and a shining light.

Our harps we left by Babel's stream,
The tyrant's jest, the Gentile's scorn;
No censor round our altar beams
And rusts our timbrel, tramp and horn.
But thou hast said, the blood of goat,
The flesh of rams, I will not prize.
A contrite heart, a humble thought,
Are mine accepted sacrifice.

Stockholders Meeting

The regular annual meeting of the stockholders of the Bank of Union will be held in the banking rooms Tuesday, January 9, at 11 A. M.
R. G. LANEY, Cashier.

Wealth

(Capt. Quillen in Fountain Inn Tribune.)
Wealth is not a matter of bank balances, but of temperament. The man who has all that he desires is no poorer than the richest man in the world.

In every village in the land are a few old gentlemen who are reputed wealthy, but are in fact very poor. They wear shabby garments, live on coarse fare and deny themselves every luxury and pleasure. True, they have in their strongboxes certain mortgages that represent sums of money, but the money is being spent and enjoyed by those to whom it was loaned. They have certain bits of paper, also that declare their ownership of certain sums of money placed in the bank; but the money isn't in the bank. It is working every day, buying luxuries and pleasures for other folk who are supposed to be poor, and every Tom, Dick and Harry carries it in his pocket.

Those who are poor have an idea that those who are rich spend great sums for clothing and food and because of their ability to spend much are uniformly happy. But many rich pinch pennies now live as they did in the days of their poverty. Long practice of thrift robbed them of the ability to enjoy spending, and their wealth brings them little that is denied the poor man.

Swearingen Proposes Free Text Books for S. C. Schools

Columbia, Dec. 27.—Free text books for public school pupils, as soon as the state can meet the cost, are recommended in the annual report of State Superintendent of Education J. E. Swearingen, which came from the presses today. He suggests that a statewide tax levy of three mills would finance the initial purchase of the books, while one mill per year would provide for their maintenance and replacement after the first year. Employment of a school accountant, in one of the state offices, also is recommended by Mr. Swearingen.

The state now has an investment of more than \$20,000,000 in public schools and grounds, the report shows. Of this total, \$18,647,013 is represented by white schools, and \$2,001,449 by negro schools.

The total income of the department last year was \$10,652,761.02, while the expenditures were \$9,517,968.21. There were 235,535 white pupils enrolled against 226,406 for the year 1920-21. For the negro pupils, the corresponding figures were 243,776 to 235,569.

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MASONIC MEETINGS

Monroe Lodge 244 A. F. & A. M. First and Third Thursday

Monroe Chapter No. 64 R. A. M. Second and Fourth Tuesday

Malta Commandery No. 19 K. T. First and Third Tuesday

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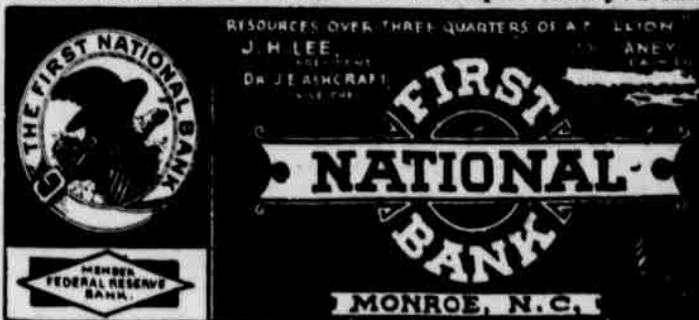
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On winter roads, the abundant power and smooth riding of the Buick seven passenger touring car gives a new confidence to cold weather motoring.

Close fitting storm curtains, provided with the special Buick weather strip to seal the joints, and that open with the doors, afford a snug comfort against storm and cold.

The long wheel base and the semi-elliptic springs with a new suspension, insure easy riding, made luxuriously comfortable by the wide, deeply upholstered seats. Every convenience for effortless driving is at the driver's hand. Standard appointments include such refinements as sun visor, windshield wiper and rear vision mirror.

The seven passenger touring car maintains, in every particular, the traditional Buick excellence.

The Buick Line for 1923 comprises fourteen models:

Four—\$2,844, 5705; 23-35, 5005; 23-34, 5117; 23-37, 5139; 23-38, 5132; 23-44, 5117; 23-45, 5105; 23-41, 5105; 23-47, 5105; 23-48, 5105; 23-49, 5105; 23-50, 5105; 23-51, 5105; 23-52, 5105; 23-53, 5105; 23-54, 5105; 23-55, 5105; 23-56, 5105; 23-57, 5105; 23-58, 5105; 23-59, 5105; 23-60, 5105; 23-61, 5105; 23-62, 5105; 23-63, 5105; 23-64, 5105; 23-65, 5105; 23-66, 5105; 23-67, 5105; 23-68, 5105; 23-69, 5105; 23-70, 5105; 23-71, 5105; 23-72, 5105; 23-73, 5105; 23-74, 5105; 23-75, 5105; 23-76, 5105; 23-77, 5105; 23-78, 5105; 23-79, 5105; 23-80, 5105; 23-81, 5105; 23-82, 5105; 23-83, 5105; 23-84, 5105; 23-85, 5105; 23-86, 5105; 23-87, 5105; 23-88, 5105; 23-89, 5105; 23-90, 5105; 23-91, 5105; 23-92, 5105; 23-93, 5105; 23-94, 5105; 23-95, 5105; 23-96, 5105; 23-97, 5105; 23-98, 5105; 23-99, 5105; 24-00, 5105.

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